

Kansas State Fire Marshal – Fire Prevention Division

References (s): 06-IFC/Chpt 34; 00-101/19.3.2.7

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FIRE FACT 090 – ALCOHOL BASED HAND SANITIZERS

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the use of hand sanitizers. We understand the need for sanitizers in public and common areas, but we also want to make sure the use of flammable liquids and gels don't create an additional fire hazard.

It's important to remember that hand sanitizers, also known as alcohol-based hand rubs (ABHR), do pose a fire hazard. The alcohol content in the sanitizers is flammable and has caused burns in connection with static and arcing electricity.

So when is it safe to install ABHR dispensers and how do you store it? If you follow these guidelines as you install ABHR dispensers, you will continue to keep your building occupants safe from the hazards of fire and explosion.

Non-Healthcare Recommendations *

- Maximum capacity of each dispenser (in rooms): 68 oz (2 L)
- Maximum capacity of each dispenser (in corridors): 41 oz (1.2 L)
- Maximum amount in a corridor: 10 gal (37.85 L)
- Corridor width: 6 ft
- Minimum spacing between dispensers: 48 in (4 ft)
- Do not install dispensers directly adjacent to, above, or below an electrical source
- Bottom of dispenser mounted between 42-48 in above the floor
- Release of content by manual means only
- If installed over carpet, smoke compartment is provided with automatic sprinkler protection

** The recommendations originate from the 2006 International Fire Code, Section 3405.5 which is not adopted by K.A.R 22-1-3. These are recommendations only.*

Healthcare Requirements

- Corridor width: 6 ft
- Maximum capacity of each individual dispenser: 41 oz (1.2 L)
- Minimum spacing between dispensers: 48 in (4 ft)
- Maximum amount in a corridor: 10 gal (37.85 L)
- Do not install dispensers directly adjacent to, above, or below an electrical source
- If installed over carpet, building is provided with automatic sprinkler protection

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q.) What about ABHR's that are the pump style sitting on a desk?

A.) *Those are not regulated by the codes for installation, however the size and quantity limitations should still be adhered. Also, staff should monitor the accessibility and use of the hand sanitizer to ensure it's being used appropriately and is not ingested.*

Q.) What is considered adjacent to an electrical source?

A.) *The definition of adjacent is not provided in the fire codes, however a good rule of thumb is 6 inches. Ultimately the determination will be made by the fire official at the time of inspection as to whether or not the installation is too close to an ignition source.*